

Chronicle Camera



Morrison



Montgomery



Richardson

Should working age of youth be raised?

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS

The Chronicle polled area citizens and asked their opinion of the city's Human Services Department recent decision to raise the working age for the disadvantage youth summer program from 14 to 16 after receiving complaints from employers that 14- and 15-year-olds were irresponsible on the job.

Johnny Montgomery, employee at R.J. Reynolds: "I disagree with it. Kids will get into trouble if they don't have anything to do."

Inez Richardson, employee at Thomasville furniture: "I think they should've raised (the age) because 16-year-olds are more responsible."

James Morrison, unemployed: "I used to work for the youth program. I worked when I was 15 and it helped me through high school."

Barbara Morris, employee at Rose Furniture: "I don't think it's fair. There are some 14- and 15-year-olds who are just as mature. My little 14-year-old brother is highly upset about it, too."

Janice Abram, unemployed: "Some kids are responsible and some aren't. I think it really depends on the per-

son. John Abrams, swimming pool operator: "A lot of kids 14 and 15 have jobs. Some kids are just responsible."

Verta Parker, produce packer: "It's a good move, but you can't really judge all 14- and 15-year-olds. Some are more mature than 16-year-olds. Still, all of them are kids."

Douglas Summers, electrician's helper: "I don't think it's such a good idea. I started working when I was 14 and I got the training that's keeping me working now. The employers have to give the kids jobs they can handle. Everybody deserves a chance."

William Thomas, self-employed: "If they can work, put them out there. If they can start at 13 and they want to work, let them work. If you wait until they're 16, they might get lazy and not want to work."

Willie Williams, customer service agent: "My son is only 13 and I think he's capable of handling a job situation. They really shouldn't raise the age because some kids need to work to help their families out."

Mark Duckett, unemployed: "If a 16-year-old can do the job and a 14- or 15-year-old can, too, then let them have a job."

Coping

There's no need to fear psychiatrists

By CHARLES FAULKNER
Syndicated Columnist

Have you ever been ashamed of your behavior? Have you ever done something and then said, "Did I really do that? Am I going crazy?"

Many people question their own behavior and reluctantly go to a psychologist or psychiatrist for evaluation and help. After explaining their questionable behavior, the psychologist often says: "Let's set up another appointment for you." The mere fact that the psychologist proposes another appointment practically serves as an indictment of the individual's behavior and, to the individual, confirms his fears that he is "crazy."

The fact is that very few people who visit psychologists are "crazy." Indeed, the behavior may not even be abnormal. The victim thinks that it is abnormal merely because he does not observe other people acting the same way that he acts. But few people who think that their behavior is abnormal will tell other people about it because they do not wish to be considered to be "nutty." Thus, while many thousands of people carry out certain kinds of behavior that is probably normal, they think that it is abnormal simply because other people do not talk about it. They go to psychiatrists or psychologists and pay thousands of dollars for "help" when they are

perfectly normal. The only thing about them is that they think they are abnormal. But since nearly everyone thinks he is abnormal, even this thinking is normal.

Although everyone probably should have an annual psychological checkup (just as one should have physical checkup) to get a fresh perspective on our lives. Most people (perhaps as many as 90 percent) who are judged to be abnormal are, in fact, quite normal.

Our suggestibility is the most imposing on our behavior. Let's examine this thesis for validity. Advertisers often manipulate our behavior and get us to do what they want us to do by means of suggestion. They create within us habitual behavior that makes us respond to advertisements emotionally. When they show someone drinking soda, we get a thirst for it. When they show someone crying, we feel an urge to cry also. Television can create practically any emotion. So when we see the soda in a grocery store we automatically reach for it. This habitual, almost compulsive behavior is often beyond our control and we interpret these uncontrollable compulsions as our "craziness."

But what is crazy behavior? Are you crazy if you are afraid to fly? Are you crazy if you have a fear of water, height, dogs snakes or large bugs? This is probably nor-

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